

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-13 and 15-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 16, 17 and 19 are amended, claim 5 is canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein, and claim 20 is added. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 16 and 17 can be found in the specification, for example, at Fig. 16B and the corresponding disclosure in the specification. Support for the amendments to claims 3 and 19 can be found in the specification, for example, at page 10, lines 3-17. Support for new claim 20 can be found at least in previously presented claims 1, 4 and 5. No new matter is added.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claim 5 contains allowable subject matter. Accordingly, claim 20 is added, which includes the allowable subject matter of claim 5, as well as intervening claims 1 and 4. However, for at least the reasons discussed below, all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement; and claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

By this Amendment, claim 19 is amended responsive to the rejections. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 1-4, 9, 13 and 15-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sasaki et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0056961) in view of Fujiwara (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0164317); claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sasaki in view of Fujiwara and further in view of Ishiduka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,217,019); and claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sasaki in view of Fujiwara and in further view of Ishiduka. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

None of the above-applied references teaches or renders obvious every claimed feature of independent claims 1, 16 and 17. None of the above-applied references teaches or renders obvious "the sheet package includes a fold-back part that is structured to be foldable along a fold line by removing the one of the first part and the second part of the side part at a perforated line, the fold line being between the front edge and an edge of the stack of sheets," as recited in independent claims 1, 16 and 17 (emphasis added).

The Office Action asserts that the push plate 11h of Sasaki corresponds to the claimed fold back part and that the cutout 25 of Sasaki corresponds to the claimed front edge (see Office Action, page 3). However, the push plate 11h of Sasaki folds along a bend line 30 that is disposed outside of an area above both the recording sheets 12 and the cutout 25 of the package outlet 20 (see Fig. 2 of Sasaki). Therefore, Sasaki does not teach or render obvious the fold line being between the front edge and an edge of the stack of sheets, as recited in independent claims 1, 16 and 17 (emphasis added).

Fujiwara and Ishiduka do not remedy the above-described deficiencies of Sasaki.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 16 and 17 are patentable over Sasaki, Fujiwara and Ishiduka. Claims 2-4, 6-13, 15, 18 and 19, which depend from independent claim 1, are also patentable for at least their dependency on independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Amendment Transmittal
Request for Continued Examination

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